

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the Abstract of this application with the following amended

Abstract:

The present invention makes it possible to enhance the automatic focusing response characteristic. An image pickup sensor performs light exposure ex11 and ex12 in synchronization with an image vertical synchronizing signal VP (waveform A in FIG. 7). A camera signal processing section reads out the image signal obtained by the light exposure ex11 at a timing VR12 (waveform D in FIG. 7). An AF detection section extracts high-frequency components of an image signal corresponding to an AF detection reduction gate frame (hereinafter referred to simply as gate frame) at a timing of the gate frame and performs rectification detection. Then the AF detection section produces a focus evaluation value just after the timing of the gate frame. An AF module fetches the produced focus evaluation value at a timing of an AF module 21 (waveform F in FIG. 7), and produces an automatic focusing control signal LD22 for bringing a focusing position close to an in-focus position (waveform G in FIG. 7) and moves a focusing lens based on the produced control signal. The present invention can be applied to a video camera. An automatic focusing control apparatus having a focusing lens and an image pickup sensor includes an image pickup section, a calculation section, a changing section, and a synthesis section. The image pick up section is configured to pick up an image of a subject in synchronization with an image vertical synchronizing signal. The calculation section is configured to calculate a focus evaluation value for performing automatic focusing based on an image pickup signal picked up by the image pickup section. The changing section then changes the distance between the focusing lens and the image pickup sensor based on the focus

evaluation value calculated by the calculation section. The synthesis section is configured to synthesize a plurality of image pickup signals picked up by the image pickup section, whereby the synthesis section synthesizes the picked up plurality of image signals into an image signal of one field or selecting one of the picked up plurality of image signals.